

## **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JOHN GARAMENDI HONORS CALIFORNIA'S WORKING MEN AND WOMEN, CALLS FOR HEALTHCARE REFORM**

**SACRAMENTO - Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi today issued the following statement:**

**"Monday is Labor Day, the day our nation sets aside to honor the loyalty, sacrifices and achievements of America's working men and women.**

"For many years, the maxim 'An injury to one is an injury to all' has represented the core principle of the organized labor movement in America. It means we must all stand together, for if we don't, there will be no one to stand with us.

"I can think of no time in our recent history at which the meaning of that simple phrase was more cogent and on-point.

"Today, working men and women toil longer and harder, for lower net wages and ever-diminishing benefits, with greater insecurity than ever before.

"Nothing exemplifies that insecurity like our nation's healthcare crisis.

"Each and every day employers cease providing healthcare benefits or are forced to dramatically increase the share their employees must pay because of the ever-spiraling cost of healthcare.

"Insurance companies continually think of new ways to reduce healthcare coverage, eliminate important medical services or limit eligibility; all while further restricting access to physicians and other healthcare providers.

"How can a nation-state like California allow seven million people, including nearly two million children, go without access to routine healthcare?

"How can the richest nation in the world allow this to happen to nearly 47 million people?

"The vast majority of people who lack healthcare coverage play by the rules; they go to work every day, pay their taxes and struggle to raise their families, yet they receive no

healthcare coverage from work, or cannot afford to pay for it.

"Even those who today receive healthcare coverage from their employers constantly worry that it will be taken away. They watch as their coverage is chipped away, slowly, but surely, every year.

"It is time we fix this broken system and guarantee healthcare for every American! We have the chance in California, with Senator Sheila Kuehl's SB 840, a single collector system that provides universal health insurance.

"Nearly 45 million Americans already have single-collector healthcare: it's called Medicare! The administrative cost of providing care for those enrolled in Medicare runs less than 10%, while the administrative and profit cost of the typical health insurance plan runs 30%. More than nine million people receive their healthcare through the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan and 761,000 Californians are enrolled in CalPERS plans. These are also single collector systems and no one calls them socialized medicine.

"As I said in my landmark 2005 report 'Priced Out,' our healthcare system is in a death spiral, and we'd better fix it quickly, before it's too late.

"Let us commit this Labor Day to stand up for working men and women; demand a healthcare system that provides high quality, affordable healthcare for all, in a system that values people over profits.

"Let us take to heart the old labor saying, 'An injury to one is an injury to all!' If we stand together and demand true reform of our healthcare system, then we will truly honor every working man and woman in our nation on Labor Day."

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Contact: Press Office  
916-445-8994